

November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2011

Mr. XXXX  
[Address]

Dear Mr. XXXX,

As Chairman of the Shafallah Center for Children with Special Needs in Doha, Qatar, one of the world's leading facilities for advocacy, research and education for persons with disabilities, it is an honor to extend this invitation for you to join us as special guest speaker at our 5<sup>th</sup> International Shafallah Forum January 22<sup>nd</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup>, 2012. Under the patronage of Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, the Forum will focus on the impact of natural disaster, conflict and humanitarian crises on persons with disabilities. We feel that in your role as a Goodwill Ambassador for the UNHCR, we hope you will lend your expertise to a panel titled "*Refugees with Disabilities*" which will examine the conditions in refugee camps, and evaluate how new technologies and other resources can promote a more inclusive environment and equal opportunities, as well as reintegration into mainstream life.

The Shafallah Forum is recognized internationally for its cutting-edge content and renowned participants and has established itself as one of the most anticipated and relevant gatherings on issues related to disability. The event is attended by First Ladies and noted dignitaries, leading disability advocates, field experts and academics from around the world. Former British Prime Minister Tony Blair and Sir James David Wolfensohn, former President of the World Bank, have given remarks at previous Forums.

This Forum is entitled *Crisis, Conflict and Disability: Ensuring Equality* and will be co-chaired by Mrs. Cherie Blair and myself. We will focus our attention to the marginalization of persons with disabilities during humanitarian crises; from the devastation of the earthquake and tsunami in Japan to those who continue to struggle with the effects of the earthquake in Haiti; and from the plight of persons with disabilities in Pakistan following last year's flooding to the humanitarian crises in refugee camps in the Middle East and Africa. According to emergency management statistics, when disasters strike persons with disabilities die in far higher percentages of the population than other people and have far fewer resources and access to help in refugee camps and in post-disaster environments. This year's World Report on Disability from WHO and World Bank puts the number of people in the world living with a disability at over 1 billion, around 15% of the world's population, which highlights the scale, complexity and global nature of this issue.

Together we can ensure that an inclusive perspective is built into crisis planning and recovery processes from the very start.

Our unique event is the premiere gathering of its kind where attendance is complementary and by invitation only. We hope that you will be able to join us in Doha this January. Please RSVP via e-mail to Dr. Valerie Karr, our Forum Coordinator at [valerie@brownlloydjames.com](mailto:valerie@brownlloydjames.com) or by telephone at +1 212 486 6879 should you have any questions and to confirm your attendance.

Sincerely,



Mr. Hassan Ali Bin Ali  
Chairman, Shafallah Center for Children with Special Needs



Mrs. Cherie Blair  
Forum Co-Chair





# INVITATION

JANUARY 22-24 | DOHA, QATAR | THE SHAFALLAH CENTER

Under the patronage of Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser

Mr. Hassan Ali bin Ali & Mrs. Cherie Blair invite you  
to the Fifth International Shafallah Forum:

## Crisis, Conflict and Disability: Ensuring Equality

Participation in the Forum is complimentary and by invitation only. We hope that you will join us, your peers, and friends this January in Doha and participate in this important event committed to creating change for people with disabilities.

Please visit our website at [www.shafallahforum.org](http://www.shafallahforum.org) to complete and submit a registration form to reserve your place at the Fifth International Forum on Disability. A Shafallah Center representative will contact you to confirm your attendance and to make your travel arrangements to Doha.

At any time, please do not hesitate to contact Matthew Van Wagenen, Shafallah Center Forum representative, at + 212.486.1469 or [shafallah@brownilloydjames.com](mailto:shafallah@brownilloydjames.com)  
The registration deadline for this year's Forum is December 22, 2011

### FORUM FOCUS

"In all wars and disasters, it is persons with disabilities that are first to die; persons with disabilities that are first to get disease and infection; and it is persons with disabilities who are the last to get resources and medicines when they are handed out. They are treated as the bottom of the pile."<sup>[1]</sup>

The 5th International Shafallah Forum will highlight aspects of humanitarian crises: from preparedness, to response, to recovery and rebuilding for persons with disabilities. It will also document the condition of those with disabilities in refugee camps and conflict zones. Among the Forum's centerpieces will be a unique gathering of First Ladies, celebrity supporters, disaster planners, and leaders of humanitarian relief organizations who will discuss and showcase the latest developments in inclusive emergency planning and their centrality to responding to and mitigating harm to those with disabilities from emergency situations.

### ABOUT THE SHAFALLAH CENTER

The Shafallah Center for Children with Special Needs was established at the behest of Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser to meet

the demands of the Qatari society to establish a center that provides comprehensive services to children with special needs. The center is a non-profit, private facility providing diagnosis, evaluation, training, and development services for children with all forms of intellectual, learning and developmental disabilities throughout the lifespan. Educational and related services are provided by a highly qualified transdisciplinary team of specialists. Areas of expertise include special education, rehabilitation, cognitive assessment, research, social work, child and adolescent psychiatry, pediatrics, behavior analysis, counseling, music therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and speech and language pathology. Part of the work of the Center is the Shafallah Medical Genetics Center which is a state-of-the-art genetics center dedicated to the welfare of children with special healthcare and educational needs and their families in the State of Qatar. The center provides high quality medical genetics services, professional and community-based education and harbors an active research enterprise all of which serves as a model for comprehensive and integrated genetic healthcare services.

<sup>[1]</sup> Excerpt from *Disabilities among refugees and conflict-affected populations*.  
Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children.



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